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ACCREDITATION CRITERIA FOR TRAINING AGENCIES FOR WORK FORCE QUALIFICATION PROGRAMS

AC371

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PREFACE

The attached accreditation criteria has been issued to provide all interested parties with guidelines on implementing performance features of the applicable standards referenced in the accreditation criteria. The criteria was developed and adopted following public hearings conducted by the International Accreditation Service, Inc. (IAS), Accreditation Committee and is effective on the date shown above. All accreditations issued or reissued on or after the effective date must comply with criteria. If the criteria is an updated version from a previous edition, solid vertical lines (||) in the outer margin within the criteria indicate a technical change or addition from the previous edition. Deletion indicators (→) are provided in the outer margins where a paragraph or item has been deleted if the deletion resulted from a technical change. This criteria may be further revised as the need dictates.

IAS may consider alternate criteria provided the proponent submits substantiating data demonstrating that the alternate criteria are at least equivalent to the attached criteria and otherwise meet applicable accreditation requirements.

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ACCREDITATION CRITERIA FOR TRAINING AGENCIES FOR WORK FORCE QUALIFICATION PROGRAMS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope: These criteria set forth requirements for obtaining and maintaining International Accreditation Service, Inc. (IAS), accreditation for training agencies for adult education for work force qualification programs.

Requirements for curriculum development are addressed in the IAS Accreditation Criteria for Curriculum Development for Work Force Qualification Programs (AC372).

1.2 Reference Documents

1.2.1 Conformity Assessment

1.2.1.1 ISO/IEC 9000-2000, *Quality Management Systems – Fundamentals and Vocabulary*.

1.2.1.2 ISO/IEC 9001-2000, *Quality Management Systems – Requirements*.

1.2.1.3 ISO/IEC 17000-2004, *Conformity Assessment – Vocabulary and General Principles*.

1.2.1.4 ISO/IEC 17024-2003, *Conformity Assessment – General Requirements for Bodies Operating Certification of Persons*.

1.2.1.5 AERA/APA/NCME:1999, *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*.

1.2.1.6 IAS Rules of Procedure for Training Agencies for Work Force Qualification Programs.

1.2.1.7 IAS Accreditation Criteria for Curriculum Development for Work Force Qualification Programs (AC372).

1.2.2 Instructor Training: Accredited agencies shall provide evidence that the accepted program(s) comply with recognized and published professional standards of practice. These may include any of the following standards, or other acceptable/published standards which are identified by the agency.

1.2.2.1 NFPA 1041-2002, Standard for Fire Service Instructor Professional Qualifications

1.2.2.2 LIUNA *Instructor Skill Standards*, June 2006. Laborers-AGC Education and Training Fund.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

2.1 Accreditation Committee: A committee of experts appointed by the IAS Board of Directors who represent governmental entities which regulate public safety laws.

2.2 Accreditation: Formal third-party recognition that a body fulfills specified requirements and is competent to carry out specific tasks.

2.3 Applicant: A legal entity which is applying for IAS accreditation as a curriculum development and/or instructor training agency.

2.4 Approved Curriculum: A curriculum which is developed or reviewed by an IAS-accredited agency using

a curriculum development or curriculum review process approved by IAS.

2.5 Approved Trainer: An instructor who has completed training by an IAS-accredited agency using an approved instructor-training process.

2.6 Assessment: On-site evaluation conducted by IAS-trained assessors and technical experts.

2.7 Certification Process: All activities by which a certification body establishes that a person fulfills specified competence requirements.

2.8 Competence: Demonstrated ability to apply knowledge and/or skills.

2.9 Contract Staff: A third-party individual or entity hired by the accredited agency to perform services which are within the scope of accreditation.

2.10 Customer: Authorized providers of training who use approved curricula, and all those who benefit from this training.

2.11 Document: Guideline or support provided to the user of the approved programs in any media or form as prescribed by the quality management system.

2.12 Management: Individuals who are responsible for administration of the accredited agency.

2.13 Nonconforming Product or Service: Any products or services which may be provided by accredited agencies which are outside of the scope of accreditation as defined by IAS.

2.14 Process: All activities which contribute to delivery of an approved service.

2.15 Reassessment: Follow-up assessment of an accredited agency in accordance with the applicable IAS Rules of Procedure.

2.16 Record: Any evidence of an activity or process.

2.17 Requirement: External legal, contractual and professional obligations of the accredited agency related to approved curricula and instructor training.

2.18 Supplier: Approved external suppliers of services which are within the scope of accreditation.

3.0 ADMINISTRATION

The applicant shall provide information on the following:

3.1 Corporate: Documentation that the agency is a legal entity. Copies of organizational charts, and descriptive information on the corporate structure. Copy of the vision and mission statement of the organization.

3.2 Facilities: The applicant agency shall have adequate facilities to fully support the activities being accredited. Detailed description of the physical plant and infrastructure shall be submitted.

3.3 Financial: The agency shall have the financial resources necessary to administer training programs in accordance with the requirements of this accreditation

criteria, and to cover associated liabilities and commitments.

3.4 Staffing

3.4.1 Organizational chart providing employee names and titles for all full- and part-time staff positions. Person(s) who are responsible for maintenance of the quality management system shall be identified. They shall have access to top management and shall have appropriate authority to implement and maintain the requirements of this accreditation criteria.

3.4.2 Job descriptions of staff positions, including information on minimum qualifications, education and experience.

3.4.3 Issues pertaining to human resources: hiring, mentoring, monitoring, and training shall be identified.

3.4.4 Maintenance of staff qualifications and competence.

3.5 Target Market: A description of the market(s) for which the training program is designed.

3.6 Procurement: A listing of services which are outsourced, and a copy of the service contracts which includes the approval and quality-assurance process.

3.7 Contract Staff: A listing of persons or agencies which are contracted to perform services which are pertinent to accreditation.

3.8 Product Promotion: A description of public promotional literature related to approved programs, to include brochures, catalogues, websites, and advertisements.

3.9 Quality Management System: The accredited agency shall provide written Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) describing the following:

3.9.1 Internal Audits: Planning, frequency, auditor training and reporting.

3.9.2 Management Review: Areas for improvement, effectiveness of systems, monitoring of process measures, review of quality policy, and results of internal audit.

3.9.3 Human Resources: Policy and procedures for recruiting, hiring, training, mentoring and monitoring performance of staff and vendors.

3.9.4 Complaints: Registration and processing of complaints, and responses to complaints.

3.9.5 Customer Satisfaction: A method of surveying and documenting the satisfaction levels of customers, and actions taken to resolve identified weaknesses.

3.9.6 Appeals: Documented due-process for handling appeals from students and users of approved training.

3.9.7 Process Monitoring: Written description of the measures for monitoring the processes and product quality.

3.9.8 Document and Data Control: List of documents, with information on review and approvals, issue and distribution controls, and information security.

Documents shall be legible and readily identifiable. Controls on obsolete documents need to be defined.

3.9.9 Records Control: List of controls on record storage, protection, retrieval, retention time, and disposition. Records shall be legible and readily identifiable.

3.9.10 Corrective and Preventive Action: Description of the process by which identified weaknesses are resolved, root causes are identified, and preventive measures are implemented.

3.9.11 Benchmarking: Description of "best practices" for the scope of service, identifying the minimum quality standards which are practiced by the accredited agency for approved programs.

3.9.12 Library Management: A library of quality and technical standards which are referenced by the accredited agency for approved programs

4.0 TECHNICAL STANDARDS

The applicant shall provide information on the following:

4.1 Organizational Structure: Documents related to structure and assigned responsibilities, structural relationships with curriculum development agencies, oversight committee(s) (structure, roles, responsibilities, and actions), staffing and workload.

4.2 Product Development, Administration, and Maintenance: Policies, procedures and documents related to the following:

4.2.1 Needs Analysis: Needs analysis based on market and job analysis research.

4.2.2 Program Planning: Determination of training schedule, participant qualifications and logistics, course logistics, and selection of the instructors/facilitators. Determination of criteria and development of assessments for issuance and renewal of certificates. Review and consideration of cumulative evaluation data from prior classes.

4.2.3 Public (Client) Information: Development and distribution of public (client) information, including a description of minimum qualification standards for issuance and renewal of certificates.

4.2.4 Training and Delivery: Recordkeeping, pre-training formative student evaluations, revisions for individual student needs, delivery of classroom and hands-on instruction, classroom management, control of the learning environment, and program logistics.

4.2.5 Evaluation: Administration of post-training assessments and issuance of certificates. Cumulative evaluations by participants and instructor/facilitator to assess efficacy of training, including: site and facilities, materials effectiveness, instructor/facilitator knowledge and effectiveness, and self-assessment of student learning.

4.2.6 Certificate Renewals: Surveillance of the ongoing competence of certified instructors. Periodic renewal of certificates to ensure ongoing competence based on participation in professional development activities.

4.3 Confidentiality: Policy on confidentiality. Maintenance of confidentiality statements. Conflict of interest statements for staff, volunteers and vendors.

4.4 Security: Office access, access to electronic and paper documents, subcontractor adherence to security policy, and protection of trademark and copyright on the product.

4.5 Assessment of Student Learning: Documentation of student assessment methods and documents, documentation to ensure objectivity and impartiality of student assessment techniques, and documentation relevant to test administration procedures and policies. The accredited agency shall certify that successful students meet essential standards of competency at the conclusion of training.

4.6 Application: Details on student application process and responsibilities.

4.7 Evaluation (Eligibility): Policies and procedures for review of student applications, to ensure objectivity and impartiality.

4.8 Decision on Certificates: Policies and procedures for issuance of certificates. If “certificates of attendance” are awarded, there must be a description of qualification requirements based on learning objectives. If professional certificates of competence are awarded, there must be a description of qualification requirements based on assessment of professional competence.

4.9 Surveillance: Policy and procedures to monitor performance of certificated instructors, with a policy for revocation or suspension for cause.

4.10 Program Updates: Documentation of policy and procedures for updating instructor training procedures to reflect current “best practices” and needs of users.

4.11 Use of Logos and Marks: Policy and procedures defining appropriate use of logograms and trademarks.

4.12 Certificate Content: Policy for content of certificates. Certificates, in whatever form, must include issuance and expiration dates.

4.13 Certificate Maintenance: Policy for maintenance and renewal of certificates. Sanctions policy allowing revocation or suspension of certificates.

5.0 ON-SITE ASSESSMENTS AND ACCREDITATION

On-site assessments are required to determine the degree of compliance with the accreditation criteria. A team of trained assessors and subject matter experts shall visit each applicant organization to conduct a thorough review of the organization and its practices.

5.1 Preassessment: Prior to scheduling the full on-site assessment, IAS will schedule a two-day visit to the applicant agency by the lead assessor and a subject matter expert, to review and comment on its degree of compliance with the accreditation criteria.

5.2 Full Assessment: In consultation with the applicant, the team leader schedules the full on-site assessment to verify compliance with the accreditation criteria.

Upon conclusion of the on-site visit, the team leader provides the applicant agency with verbal feedback, with specific information on major nonconformances, if any. Within 30 days of the assessment, a formal report is submitted to IAS by the team leader for transmission to the applicant agency.

5.3 Follow-up Assessment: In some cases, the team leader may recommend to IAS that a follow-up assessment take place to verify implementation of corrective measures taken by the applicant agency in response to the full assessment. Typically, follow-up assessments include the team leader and another member for one or two days on-site.

5.4 Full Accreditation: If the final report submitted by the IAS team leader indicates full compliance with requirements, the applicant agency is placed on a list for final review by IAS for issuance of the formal accreditation certificate. Accredited agencies will be subject to an on-site surveillance assessment at the conclusion of the initial year of accreditation.

6.0 ANNUAL REPORTS AND REASSESSMENTS

To maintain accredited status, the accredited agency must, at all times, be in compliance with the rules of procedure and the accreditation criteria. Annual reports addressing changes in key staff, changes in facilities or operating procedures, or any problems that could potentially impact the entity’s accredited status, must be prepared by the accredited agency and submitted to IAS.

At the end of every two-year term commencing from the initial date of accreditation, the accredited agency will be subject to on-site full reassessment by IAS. ■